
LYONS TALES



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VIRGINIA JAGUAR CLUB
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LYONS TALES

LYONS' ROAR

COVID-19 puts bugs in plans of club, its members

Dear Fellow VJC Members:

This has certainly been an unusual few months for many folks, including the Sihlers. To start with, on February 3, Mary and I headed for Bali to embark on a cruise to Australia and New Zealand. Unfortunately, the cruise line booked us to fly with a change of planes in Hong Kong. All went well on the flight and for the two days visiting in Bali.

About 12 hours before we were to board the ship, however, the Australian government prohibited entrance to anyone who had been in any part of China in the 30 days before trying to enter. So, the cruise line put us up for two more nights in Bali (it was the rainy season) and then flew us back via Dubai. As Mary noted, around the world in 80 days is an adventure, in 8 it's an ordeal—especially at our ages.

Jaguar Clubs have not been able to escape similar problems created by the new corona virus. As of this writing in late April, I have heard no reports of VJC members contracting the disease. I certainly hope this is the case. If I am wrong, please accept my personal best wishes as well as those on behalf of the Club for a safe and quick recovery.

Deciding whether to proceed with our concours in conjunction with the Antique Automobile Club of America/Richmond scheduled for June 20 has been difficult. It has been an excellent venue with great support from the AACA. Still, our concours group needs at least two months to get organized, so a go/no-go decision had to be made by April 23. Although the Governor had announced the lockdown and prohibition for public meetings of more than ten people would expire June 9, this seemed to be a very close call. Even without the lockdown, would Club and JCNA members want to participate?



Mary & VJC Pres. Bill Sihler.

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Send your submissions to:
glassgreg@hotmail.com
 Put Lyons Tales in subject box.

SAVE THE DATE:

To Be Announced

On Page One:

Bill & Mary, Bogey
& Brown Beauty.



See Roar, p. 4

CONCOURS

Teleconference Meeting held in April

Virginia Jaguar Club Teleconference Discussion VJC Concours 2020, April 18, 2020. Minutes of the Meeting:

Attendees.: Bill Sihler, Susan Sumner, Roy Sumner, Brian Trickett, Ron Gaertner, Jeffra Schowalter, Peter Schowalter, George Parker, Wayne Estrada, Sherman Taffel, Bill Guzek, Greg Glassner.

Agenda.

Since our VJC Concours is scheduled for June 20, President Bill Sihler called a meeting to decide whether to proceed owing to the situation regarding the ongoing Coronavirus Pandemic and, if not, what would be our other options.

Peter started the conversation, reporting that many other car show/events throughout the country had been cancelled and that AACA club had not yet made their decision as to whether the event in Richmond would continue. Many entities would have to be involved in making that decision.

The general consensus of the group was not to go ahead with the concours for June 20th.

Some of the other options discussed were:

A. Accept the Shenandoah Valley BCC's offer to let us hold our event with their annual show on October 3rd at Waynesboro.

B. Approach the organizers of the Festival of the Wheel



car show which they hold at Charlottesville in September.

C. Consider affiliating with the AACA if they decide to move their show to August 22nd or 23rd

D. Sit out 2020 without a concours altogether.

After discussing the pros and cons of each of the above options, it was decided that we would join the Shenandoah Valley BCC show for October and keep an eye on the coronavirus situation as it develops regarding reopening. It was felt that we should have enough judges for a sanctioned event but we may have to curtail the number of entries. If the concours was not sanctioned, we could still go ahead and make it a show we could participate in and enjoy.

At the same time, we should inform the R/AACA that if they have to reschedule their show for August then we would be willing to support it (to the extent possible, given current conditions as of their new date), just not as a formally judged JCNA concours. In other words, our VJC members and hopefully some other Jag owners would show our cars, have a popular vote between ourselves and enjoy the day out.

Bill would consult/request JCNA for a sanctioned event at Waynesboro.

Peter would inform AACA Richmond of our decisions.

Meanwhile Ron would investigate booking a block of hotel rooms at Waynesboro if this goes ahead.

With there being no more issues to discuss the meeting was adjourned.



Members had their cake and ate it as well at the annual meeting in January. The cake was a virtual cake at April's meeting

*Respectfully Submitted,
Brian Trickett, Secretary*

Roar

Continued from p. 2

The VJC Board met on April 18 to consider whether (1) to proceed with the June 23 concours, (2) to abandon the idea of having a 2020 concours, or (3) to explore affiliating with another event. The Board decided that there were too many uncertainties to proceed with (1). After discussion, it was decided that (2) was a little drastic at this point in the year but might be what we had to do.

New Venue

After considerable discussion of alternatives in (3), it was decided to accept the invitation of the Shenandoah Valley British Car Club to participate in that group's show on Saturday, October 3, in a Waynesboro, Virginia, park. We greatly appreciate the SVBCC's invitation to hold our concours at their event. Full details about it can be found on the SVBCC website.

This date is late enough in the year that it should be clearer whether the concours would be safe, and it would likely be

cooler than events scheduled for earlier in the summer. The attractive venue also allows for excellent social spacing, and several VJC members have participated in the past. We are exploring arranging rooms at a Waynesboro motel for those who want to arrive on Friday or leave on Monday. We also have to get JCNA permission to shift dates. Sherm Taffel, our chief judge, and Wayne Estrada and Ron Gaertner, concours co-chairs, will be working on arrangements for the event. Further details will be announced.

JCNA AGM

As described elsewhere in this issue, the JCNA was forced to call off its scheduled Annual General Meeting (AGM) in March and move it to August 22 in Columbia, South Carolina. Details will be announced later, but a full meeting is planned by the South Carolina Club. If anyone wishes to be a delegate for the Club, please let me know so I can arrange for the Board of Directors to make the appointment. Alas, the Club can't afford financial support for our delegates' expenses.

As an interim, JCNA decided to hold a pseudo-AGM remotely. This meeting and its favorable outcome for our Club is described elsewhere in this issue. As a result of the discussions, the proponents revised the proposed changes in the judging rules. They will possibly be even a little easier than before for small clubs, such as ours, to qualify for sanctioned events, those generating competitive scores. I appreciate the support given me by the Board and other Club members for opposing the new rules as drafted.

Member Support

I also want to thank the Club members who have soldiered on during the health emergency. Bill Guzek fulfilled his responsibilities as Membership Chair so that we would retain our ability to participate in the JCNA AGM. Bill also set up the Board's April conference call. Peter Schowalter has served as liaison with the Richmond groups that are organizing the Antique Automobile Club show. Despite a serious medical issue, Greg Glassner produced excellent editions of the *Lyons Tales*. Susan Sumner worked at scheduling events, which effort has come for naught so far this year. George Parker pulled at whatever oar needed pulling. Brian Trickett kept the minutes. We'll see what we can work out as situations develop.

Keep healthy.

-- Bill Sihler, VJC President



Pres. Bill Sihler.

PHOTOS



They say one man's rust is another man's patina



VJC Past President David Harrison took these photos of "Rusty Gold" finds in the Richmond and Petersburg area. If you see a potential project, contact David for location. (If you take on the TR3, the Lyons Tales Editor has a widshield frame in his carport he keeps forgetting to throw out.)

"And the rest is rust and stardust."

-- Vladimir Nabokov



FROM THE EDITOR'S LAPTOP



Phil Hill leads Jim Hall in their Chapparral 2Es during the 1966 Can-Am at Laguna Seca.

Roadracing Courses I have loved ... Part III

By Greg Glassner
LT Editor

This is the third installment on the North American road courses where I have enjoyed watching sports car and open wheel racing over the years.



Editor Greg Glassner driving Miss Virginia around in his XK8.

In the 1960s, a lot of SCCA racing took place on temporary airport circuits, with little more than hay bales to delineate the racing line. I attended at least one race at Cumberland, MD, Dunkirk, N.Y. and McConnellville, PA.

I remember one of these the best, as three of us drove from the Penn State Campus to the Cumberland circuit in my friend Davey Waxman's Triumph TR3, with top down, of course. This took some doing. I recall some of this journey slouched uncomfortably behind the seats with my legs dangling outside the bodywork on one side and my arms on the other. The trick was to avoid the spinning rear wheels with one's extremities.

We arrived after dark at the Cumberland Airport, which was actually on a graded and levelled mountaintop across the state line in West Virginia. We spread our bedrolls on the ground in what looked like a likely place and zonked out for the night.

When we woke up the next day we realized we had camped in the middle of the paddock and were surrounded

See Laptop, p. 7

Laptop

Continued from p. 6

by race cars and trailers that had crawled in during the wee hours of the morning and somehow avoided flattening us. I still have some artsy color slides somewhere of a Ferrari, Porsche RSK, and Fiat Abarth glistening in the morning dew and dawn's early light at Cumberland Airport.

The other airport circuit I hit during the 1960s was the big one, Sebring. Waxman, who had very indulgent parents, swapped his TR3 for his mother's brand new Ford Mustang fastback and three or four of us crammed into its confines for a 1966 spring break trip from Penn State to the 12 Hours of Sebring world endurance championship weekend. As I recall, we were underfinanced, with the possible exception of Davey, so we survived on beer, concession stand hot dogs and a pillowcase full of oranges we poached from a roadside orchard. This was a fatality-marred race, but that didn't stop a bunch of 21-year-old car nuts from having the time of their lives away from the moderating influence of classrooms, textbooks and parental guidance. Security was lax, so we could check out the cars and drivers in the makeshift garages. I recall getting the autographs of Phil Hill and Jo Bonnier, who were playing a game of gin using an orange crate for a card table. I also took a photo of Jerry Grant and Dan Gurney trying to haul a defunct Yamaha Trail bike balanced on another trail bike. The morning after the race we scoured the empty garages for swag and I still have an aluminum wheel center cap from one of the Alfa-Romeo TZs. On the way home we managed two days on Daytona Beach. We also stopped at someone's sister's apartment in Wilmington, DE, where I met a leggy blonde Penn State grad student with a green MGB who erased all



Chaparral 2Es at play at Laguna Seca.

thoughts in my mind of marrying my college sweetheart after graduation. But that's another story.

As it turned out, Uncle Sam had plans for me anyway and I was in uniform by July. Before reporting for the Army, I took in a race day at McConnellsville, PA, and remember little about that event except that Pittsburgh's Yenko Chevrolet had its Corvair Stingers there. Development of the Corvair had come a long way by 1966 and it is a shame that Ralph Nader and GM killed it off. (Although the '66 Corvair I owned in 1971 turned out to be a lemon.)

The Army shipped me to AIT in Fort Ord, CA after Basic at Ft. Dix, NJ, causing me to miss the 1966 U.S. GP at Watkins Glen. Fortunately, I was able to compensate with the Oct. 16, 1966 Can-Am race at Laguna Seca, my only visit to that wonderful natural terrain road course on the West Coast. We were supposedly confined to the post that weekend, but that didn't stop us. The track was actually located on leased government land at the back of Ft. Ord in those days. To this day I maintain that we were only technically AWOL during the cab ride from the front gate to the other side of the fort. We bribed the cab driver to be there waiting for us after the race was over and he was. We arrived back on the base undetected.

About all I remember of the race was hiking down along the famous corkscrew and looking back to see Phil Hill and Jim Hall come over the crest in their high-wing Chevy Chaparral 2Es. I still have one of those "mind's eye" snapshots in my head to this day. You heard the rumble of approaching V8 Chevys, then you saw just the wings on their high stalks, and finally the white cars crested the hill. All of this happened in a split second.



Start of the 1966 Sebring 12 Hours of Endurance.

See Laptop, p. 8



An abandoned section of the old Fuji track.

Laptop

Continued from p. 7

With the aid of the internet, I refreshed my memory. Hill and Hall finished 1-2 that day, besting an illustrious field of drivers representing two eras of motor racing. Bruce McLaren (McLaren Elva Mk. II-B) finished third and was the only other driver on the lead lap. Mark Donohue was a lap down in a Penske Lola T-70 Mk2. Masten Gregory was fourth in a McLaren Elva. “Also-rans” included John Surtees, Pedro Rodriguez, Parnelli Jones, Lothar Motschenbacher, George Follmer, Chris Amon and Denny Hulme. Dan Gurney and Dam Posey retired their cars and Jackie Stewart was a DNS with overheating.

It was certainly worth risking a couple of nights in the brig to have witnessed that historical race on that incomparable racetrack.

After Army Transportation OCS I served at Fort Eustis in 1967-68. I took full advantage of military hops to the Daytona 24 hours in '68 and managed to make the long haul to Watkins Glen in both years before winging my way to a 13-month deployment to Thailand in December, 1968.

In 1969, I used up some leave time by taking hops from Thailand to Okinawa and on to Japan, where “Jack” Yamaguchi, a correspondent for Road & Track and several other Western publications, most graciously took me to the Tokyo

Motor Show. The Nissan Fairlady (Datsun 240Z) debuted at this show along with many other interesting cars.

On Jack’s recommendation, I drove down in my rented 360cc Honda coupe to the Mt. Fuji circuit and caught a day of motorcycle racing. This was a challenging and quite dangerous venue that eventually hosted the 2007 Japanese Grand Prix after reconfiguration. To date, this is the only race meeting I have attended outside of North America, although I did set foot on the Monaco Grand Prix course on a visit to Europe in 1970.

While in Japan I also drove up to a new Honda car factory and talked my way into a guided tour. In 1969, it was apparent to me that the American car industry was ignoring a legitimate threat to their dominance. Back in Thailand, I rather boldly wrote to Toyo Kogyo (Mazda) and offered my services as a dealer in the U.S. I received a polite reply, saying that if they did decide to sell cars in the states, they would go with more established dealers. (I guess a 1st Lieutenant mustering out with about \$3,800 in his bank account and no experience beyond selling his own well-used cars at a significant loss did not scream “Good Prospect” to the Mazda folks. So I blew my bankroll on a 1969 Alfa Romeo.

NEXT: Wrapping up my trackside odyssey.

THE STARS AND THEIR JAGUARS



Humphrey Bogart and wife Lauren Bacall aboard the sailboat he loved even more than his Jaguar.

Yes, even Bogey was a Jaguar enthusiast

EDITOR'S NOTE – As we move along to another installment of the “Stars and their Jaguars” series, there is a suspicion that some of the stars that follow are simply men or women who owned a Jaguar at some point in their lives and the evidence that they had British Racing Green blood coursing through their veins gets a bit thin. This month’s star may be an example of that. But he did own and enjoy a Jaguar XK120, although he may have used it primarily for jaunts to the yacht club

By Greg Glassner
LT Editor

Despite his tough-as-nails image on the screen, Humphrey Bogart was a fairly sophisticated individual. He was born to wealth. His father, Belmont DeForest Bogart was a New York heart surgeon and descended from the first Dutch settlers in New Amsterdam. His mother, Maud Humphrey Bogart was a talented magazine illustrator and suffragette whose ancestors came over on the Mayflower. The image

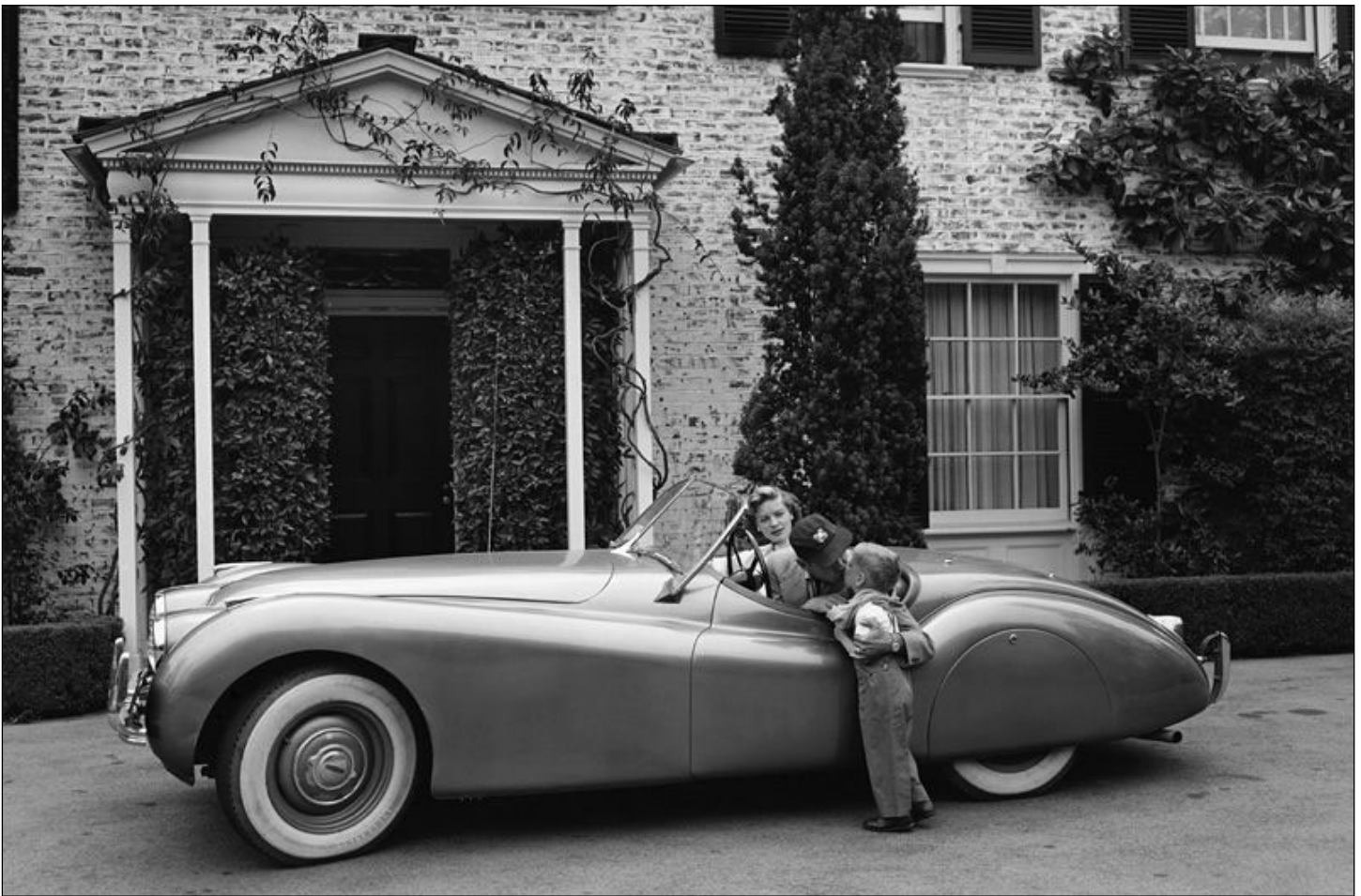
of her young son Humphrey appeared in many of her commercial illustrations.

Bogart learned to sail during summers at the family digs

See Stars, p. 10



Humphrey Bogart and his Jaguar XK120 roadster.



In this touching photo, Bogart kisses his young son before whisking Mommy away in their 2-seat XK 120.

Stars

Continued from p. 9

at Canandaigua Lake, N.Y. He joined the Navy in WWI and loved being on the water in any available craft. In his later years he and third wife, Lauren Bacall spent much time aboard his 55-foot schooner Santana and he confessed the boat was the love of his life. Bogart was also a whiz at playing chess and delighted in upsetting champion-caliber players.

Other vehicles and watercraft associated with Bogart were the 1940 Buick convertible in “Casablanca,” and the beat up pickup truck in “Treasure of the Sierra Madre”, and the rundown boat he skippered in “The African Queen.”

Bogart was educated at Trinity School in New York City and was sent to Phillips Academy in Andover, Mass., in preparation for medical studies at Yale. He was expelled from Phillips and joined the U.S. Naval Reserve.

In the 1920s, Bogart worked on stage in various capacities. In 1930, he inked a contract with Fox, making his feature film debut in a ten-minute short, Broadway’s Like That

(1930), co-starring Ruth Etting and Joan Blondell. Fox released him after two years. He had his breakthrough role in *The Petrified Forest* (1936) from Warner Bros.

Bogart appeared in 28 films, usually as a gangster, twice in Westerns and even a horror film. His landmark year was 1941 with roles in classics such as *High Sierra* (1941) and as Sam Spade in one of his most fondly remembered films, *The Maltese Falcon*. These were followed by *Casablanca* (1942), *The Big Sleep* (1946), and *Key Largo* (1948). Bogart also formed his own production company, and in 1948 made *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*.

Bogie was nominated for an Academy Award for *Casablanca* (1942), won the best actor award for *The African Queen* (1951) and was nominated for his role as Captain Queeg in *The Caine Mutiny* (1954), a film made when he was already seriously ill.

Humphrey Bogart died in his sleep at his Hollywood home following surgery and a battle with throat cancer.

MEMBER PROJECT



The Murph-Harrison E-Type ready for its first road test.

Brown Beauty: It took two owners to finish

By David Harrison
VJC Past President

VJC members of yore may remember the January VJC Kickoff meetings once hosted by Bruce and Marian Murff. Before the meetings started, the lads would kick tires in the chilly garage and admire Bruce's many Jaguar projects, while the ladies would sensibly drink tea and keep warm.

Bruce's prime project was his 1969 E type restoration, a Sable roadster originally found by Don Jackson in the Virginia Beach area. It seemed to be complete, an easy and quick restoration and reasonably cheap. However "Cheap Jag" can be an oxymoron.

Bruce soon discovered a surprise hidden under the heater box. The battery had leaked acid onto the left hand frame just where it bolted onto the bulkhead, dissolving both frame and lower bulkhead. The bulkhead could be patched with care but the frame was toast. To replace the frame Bruce had to remove the bonnet, trapeze, radiator, drop the engine,

transmission, accessories, remove frames, front suspension; it goes on and on. Bruce basically ended up with a bare tub, which still needed sills and floors in addition to the

See Beauty, p. 12



Beautiful under the hood as well.

Beauty

Continued from p. 11
bulkhead repair. Undaunted Bruce ordered parts, sent off the tub for floors and sills, rebuilt the diff, bought new side and picture frames from the UK, got the tub back, and put the car back together over a period of several years. It was a huge investment in his time, energy and treasure, and was done to a high standard.

The Prince of Darkness came into the scene at this point. The car was more or less together mechanically, but the front wiring harness was a tangle of loose wires. The car originally had A/C, and Jag had cobbled up a Mickey Mouse system with a reverse mounted alternator on the front of the engine, with the compressor mounted where the non A/C alternator had been.

The A/C system was long gone, and Bruce had installed a correct non-A/C alternator. However, the original alternator harness was still on the car and now it was incorrect and way too long .

Tracing faded old wiring with the “help” of Jag’s wiring diagrams is not for everyone. One false move and what remains of the harness can melt down. Also the early Series

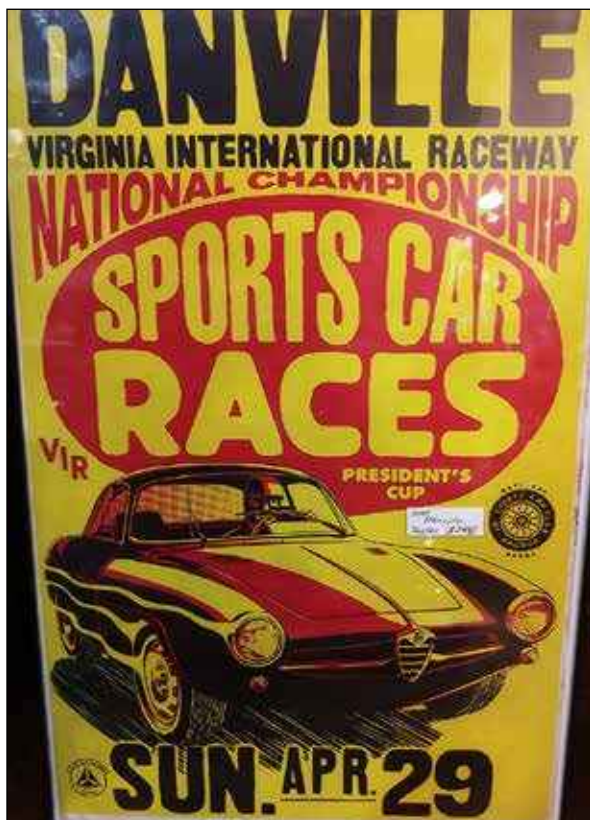
two E types were in continual flux and the wiring diagrams never seemed to catch up.

Bruce lost momentum and enthusiasm at this point. The car sat for another few years. This is where I came into the picture.

(To be Continued)



Not many XKE floors look like this.



VJC CALENDAR

TBA

Due to COVID-19, your guess is as good as ours. As the leadership of the Virginia Jaguar Club finds out which concours, races, autocrosses, slaloms, rallies, drives, etc. are still solid or rescheduled, we will keep you informed. Stay safe and sound.

The Editor

At left, VJC Past President David Harrison sent in this photo of an old race weekend at VIR. Can you guess the year? At press deadline, the August XX ALMS weekend at VIR is still scheduled, as are many events in September and October.

SHOP TALK

MGA: These boots were made for trashing

By David Harrison

VJC Past President

Just over a year ago a CVBCC infomail advised of an MGA for sale near Chesterfield Courthouse, a few miles from my home. I immediately contacted the owner, Vance Carter and went over to look at the car, a very early and very pretty 1500 in black over red, with steel wheels and whitewalls. It had been sitting in his garage for about 15 years. It didn't take long to make a deal which included a cache of NOS big Healey and Jensen-Healy parts. I called my local classic towing bloke (Chesterfield Towing), all four wheels were locked so the MGA had to be dragged out of the garage to my home.

The MGA was in relatively good shape but everything rubber had been petrified by previous years of storage in a hot garage in Ft Lauderdale. I expected to replace the entire brake and clutch system (a saga in itself) plus the usual belt and hoses, but didn't expect to replace all of the myriad bullet connectors. They were a royal pain to access, dismantle and replace, especially the doubles.

I took advantage of our recent social separation to replace the last rubber item on the list, the steering rack boots. I read Mike Ash's excellent MGA book, and it seemed like an easy job. Well it would be, if the rack was out of the car, or the radiator was removed, or the car was up on a lift. The MGA is said to be easy to maintain, assuming you are a wiry 5 ft 6 inches with tiny strong hands. Two hundred pounders with hams for hands better get a Chevy.

The boots are secured to the rack and tie rods by special clamps, each with a tiny clamp bolt with an even tinier Phillips head. My car had the original clamps, obscured by aeons of dirt and grease. The tie rod clamp bolt was easy to reach but tedious to unscrew. I swear MG installed the rack clamps off the car as the clamp bolts were totally inaccessible. I had to use a long drift from inside the bonnet to bang them round, damaging one of them in the process. In retrospect it would have been easier to cut the bands off with a Dremel as you are not going to reuse them anyway.

The next step requires that you have jacked up each wheel, taking due precautions. The tie rod is screwed into the tie rod end and locked with a lock nut. I marked the lock nut flats and the rod with whiteout to count the turns, loosened the



The old and the new boot.

lock nut slightly then unscrewed the tie rod using a wrench on the flats milled into the tie rod. The tie rod end flopped down, and I removed the lock nut, counting the turns (23 on one side and 24 on the other). I pulled off the greasy old boot using grippy gloves, in my case the rubber had bonded to the metal. Your rack boots may be full of old oil so watch out. In my case it was obvious these boots were meant for trashing.

How often we read "assembly is the reverse". It's never that easy. The new boot from Moss is a tight fit at each end. I had to use a box wrench to push the new boot over the tie rod end. Expanding the boot end over the rack housing was a real struggle, it took a combination of fingers and a lot of cussing. I was originally critical of the Moss clamps as

See Boots, p. 14

Virginia Jaguar Club



VJC Past President David Harrison's MGA.

Boots

Continued from p. 13

being non-original but the original ones are literally impossible to fit on the car. The Moss rack end clamp is basically just a hose clamp. It is large enough when opened to slip round the housing and should be tightened just enough to secure it without gripping the housing. The Moss tie rod end clamp was too small, so I used a regular hose clamp, and again left it secured but loose. The clamps do not look

original but who is going to see them.

The worst was now over. I installed the lock nut, and counted back the turns. Next I pulled the tie rod and the tie rod end together, screwed the tie rod back in, and tightened the lock nut and the clamps. The last job was to fill the rack with 90 weight gear oil, and get a Sam Adams beer from the fridge.

Membership

Membership in the VJC is open to any Jaguar enthusiast, whether you own a Jaguar or not.

For more information please send an email to Bill Guzek, VJC Membership Chairman:
bill.guzek@ieee.com

and we will send you details on how to become a member.

Or fill in and return the membership application on page 19.

Visit us online at: www.vajaguarclub.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/904051982964621/>The Virginia Jaguar Club is affiliated with

The Jaguar Clubs of North America

Submissions

We encourage our members to submit articles, stories and pictures for publication in Lyons Tales. We kindly ask you follow the specifications listed below. To submit an article, please send to glassgreg@hotmail.com.

Make sure you reference

Lyons Tales somewhere in the subject line.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

15th of the month preceding the issue month.

SUBMISSION SPECIFICATIONS

Text: any Regular Hoefler, Arial,

Calibri or New Times Roman

Font Size: 10-12 pt

Format: Word, Pages or Text file

MEMBER CONTRIBUTION



Bill and Mary Sihler with new additions to their growing Jaguar Fleet.

Sihler family fleet adds two modern Jaguars

By Bill Sihler
VJC President

It's been a long time, over 30 years I guess, since we have owned two new cars at more or less the same time. "New" is herein defined as not having had a prior owner other than the dealer because a couple of our "new" cars were dealer demonstrators or loaners. But, to our unexpected surprise, we are now again in that condition.

In the January-February President's Letter I discussed the 2018 Sportsbrake we had bought late in 2019. When we were at the Carolina Jaguar Club's Concours at Little Switzerland in July, we were encouraged to check out the Jaguar 2018 models that were being discounted to clear. We found a rossello red (deep burgundy color) XF Sportsbrake

at Rosenthal-Tyson's Corner. The price was very attractive, so we splurged to replace our 2005 Sports Wagon. (Rossello Red is the name JLR has adopted for its hue of deep burgundies. It seems the name Rossello comes from the Italian and was originally applied to a person with red hair or a reddish completion. Doubt that anyone ever had hair the natural color that JLR is calling Rossello Red.)

As I noted in that earlier letter, we were very impressed with how much technology had developed not only since our 2005 Sports Wagon but also since our 2013 XJL. Although our Sportsbrake, named Delilah, is not top of the line and omits a number of interesting features, it does have a number that are very appealing to us elderly folks. These

See Fleet, p. 16

Fleet

Continued from p. 15

include a lane-maintenance feature and a very wide-angle back up camera with a cautionary alert that sounds an alarm if a car is whipping along behind yours.

We drove Delilah to Traverse City, MI, at Thanksgiving to spend the holiday with our son and his wife. Trip went very well. Lovely car to drive. By driving, we were fortunate to miss two snow storms that played a bit of havoc with the Midwest airline schedules. Delilah did fine in the small amount of snow we encountered.

Back at home base, we began to get e-mails from Rosenthal-Tysons Corner encouraging us to trade in our 2013 XJL, a car with which we were very happy. We ignored the invitation until mid-January when Rosenthal got specific about the trade in and the price on a 2019 XJL in BRG. The net price seemed about what we would expect to pay net in 2022 or 2023 for the typical three-year-old vehicle we buy.

After considering the “safety” features we had found on Delilah and our ages, it began to make sense latching onto the extra safety now rather than in three years. So, off to Tysons Corner.

Won't go into the details of Rosenthal having brought the wrong XJL in BRG from Chantilly. We wanted the one with ivory seats, but the one with tan seats appeared. Most amusing, in retrospect, when the sale associate takes us out to the car, whips open the doors, and we say it's the wrong car.

The right car eventually appears, and I spend some of the wait time trying to figure out how to keep Delilah and this new car charged up while we expected to be away for six weeks starting ten days from then. It turns out that you have to have a special charging feature installed, which comes with a trickle charger. That all totals about an extra \$400. But, Rosenthal didn't have them in stock.

And, when the correct car arrived, the sales associate notices a little scratch that should be repainted. So, we take back our old XJL as a loaner and return home. My first task is to get in touch with the Richmond JLR dealer, which does have the devices, to make appointments for their installation. Managed to get all that done the Friday before we left on Monday. Hardly had time to drive the new car to Richmond and back before we took off, let alone to figure out all the features.

Well, things being as they are, we get to Bali to pick up our cruise only to discover that we couldn't board the ship!

Seems that the cruise line had sent us out with a change of plane in Hong Kong. Twelve hours before we were to board, the Australians decided that folks who had been in China within 30 days of arrival wouldn't be allowed to land. So, we were shipped back to the US via Dubai, having gone around the world in eight days. That's an ordeal at our age, not an 80-day adventure. In retrospect, it probably worked out for the best.

Among other things, on return I had time to study the owner's manual to try to figure out all the features the car had. It was disappointing that it didn't have the lane discipline that Delilah has, but it had a number of other safety features that are useful. Adaptive cruise control, for one. All-around cameras, for another. Put on the 360-degree view and it's easy to see whether you are properly in your parking space (a challenge with a long vehicle). Had fun when I took the new car to the car wash (exterior wash only; driver stays in the car during the process). Turned on the 360 camera as we went through the washing process. Couldn't see a thing out of the windows, but it was easy to see where we were in the cameras.

Haven't checked out other marques, so it's possible that there are more elaborate features elsewhere. In the past, when we have checked, the Jaguar model came out as preferred on an all-things-considered basis. So far, the comfort is great, the selection of drive style alternatives works well, the navigation is very good. There is the ability to set up a WiFi hotspot, if you want to spend \$30 a month for a connection, but it's also set for a cell phone to do the job.

Because of the lockdown, we haven't had a chance to do any significant driving and probably won't for a while. Since early February, have only driven a shade less than 1,000 miles. Very disappointing that the concours season looks very bleak. We had been looking forward to entering one of the cars in several.

Finally, we had to find a name for the new XJL. I suggested 'gator because it was green and powerful. Overruled. Then I suggested Samson, Delilah's companion. Was advised that idea was unacceptable because Samson was too course. Finally, in part because the license plate we've had since our first Jag starts with JEM, the name Emerald was selected. A dark emerald, admittedly, but a sparkler just the same.

Still, that Carolina Jaguar Club Concours last year proved to be very, very expensive.

TECH TIP

Battery swap for family heirloom XK120

By George Parker
VJC Vice President

With apologies to the purists out there....

When Dad passed the XK-120 off to me in 2013, it had two Interstate 6V batteries (in series for a 12V system), which he had installed in the early 2000's, so "about" 10-ish years old at that time. They soon met their inevitable demise and were replaced with two new Interstate 6V batteries.

Then our "big event" happened in May of 2015 (5 years ago!) and the car went into storage awaiting a full cosmetic refurbishment. I decided to take the Spitfire's insurance settlement and roll it into completely rewiring the 120, as the wiring in that car was installed in the late 80's, as Dad was completing it's restoration.

Part of the rewiring process was installing yet another set of new batteries, sourced and installed by Gassman Automotive in Waynesboro, who did the full reassembly of the car. These were installed at the end of 2017, and I got the car back in January of 2018.

Last summer, I started having issues with the batteries again - car wouldn't start, put on charger, then it would start. But this year, no matter how much I charged the batteries (and the charger told me they were at 100%), the car still would not crank over.

I pondered the possible causes - failed starter solenoid? Failed starter motor? Failed starter switch or button? Finally, a fellow CVBCC member commented that his experience had always been "it's the battery, stupid" (my word, but I'm pretty sure it's what he was thinking! hahaha) - and that



Older style dual wet cell 6V battery installation.

they *can* lose their cranking amps, even if the voltage is right where it should be. My friend who ran the race team I used to work on told me the same thing. So I focused on battery replacement.

Well, the thought of yet "another" pair of wet cell 6V batteries was not very appealing - this would have been the "fourth" set just since I got the car in 2013 (in 30+ years, Dad only put two sets in!). They just don't seem to last. So I started the search for alternatives. I thought "Boy wouldn't it be great if I could find a sealed battery that fit in the battery wells of the 120 (behind the seats)!" As I searched around, I found a guy on the jag-lovers.com forum with a 120 who had done this exact conversion. After a bit of further research, I settled on an Odyssey PC925 battery, which fit into the XK's battery well perfectly. Well, except that it was about 3" too short. So I built a spacer/riser block out of a couple of chunks of 2x4 and a 1" thick piece of flat board, and then drilled them for "ventilation". Do they really need ventilation? I have no idea, but it makes me feel better. I also had to source a longer ground cable, but McMaster-Carr had exactly what I needed (if perhaps a tad too long - but better than too short!).

Another advantage of this sealed battery is there would (should?) be no off-gassing corrosion. Before installing the battery, I did have to do some cleanup and touch-up painting (despite being under cover) of the battery wells.

It should also be more reliable - the gentleman on jag-lovers.com claims his cranks the engine over like new - but is eight years old.

Time will tell.



Modified Odyssey PC925 sealed battery installation.

CLUB OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Who to contact about the Virginia Jaguar Club

Lyons Tales is the official publication of The Virginia Jaguar Club, Inc.

Mailing Address:
Virginia Jaguar Club, Inc.
c/o 3215 Heathcote Lane
Keswick, VA 22947, USA
General Information: 434-296-5354
Email: sihlerww@embarqmail.com
Website: <http://www.VaJaguarClub.com>
Traveler Contact: Bill Sihler
Phone: 434-296-5354

Officers (and other humans with varying degrees of prominence)

President: Bill Sihler
Phone: 434-296-5354
Email: sihlerww@embarqmail.com

Vice President: George Parker
Phone: 540-287-2311
Email: George@cantstopthinkingbig.com

Secretary: Brian Trickett
Phone: 804-639-2394
briantrickett1@gmail.com

Acting Treasurer: Bill Sihler
Phone: 434-296-5354
Email: sihlerww@embarqmail.com

Past President: David Harrison
Phone: 804-748-4601
Email: davidmharrison2003@yahoo.com

Slalom Chair: Open

Membership: Bill Guzek
Phone: 434-525-0739
Email: bill.guzek@ieee.com

Events Chair: Susan Sumner
Phone: 540-672-3230
Email: Susan.sumner@gmail.com

Concours Chair: Wayne Estrada
Phone: 202-552-4074
Email: Wayne@SmartTriangles.com

Chief Judge: Sherman Taffel
Phone: 410-302-3930
Email: staffel@comcast.net

Rally Master: Open

Webmaster: Wayne Estrada
Phone: 202-552-4074
Email: Wayne@SmartTriangles.com

Lyons Tales Editor: Greg Glassner
Phone: 804-349-6750
Email: glassgreg@hotmail.com

LT Contributing Editor: George Parker
540-287-2311
George@cantstopthinkingbig.com

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ANY ROAD TRAVELED

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-- The Editor



Lyons Tales of the
Virginia Jaguar Club, Inc.
c/o Greg Glassner, Editor
20075 Jeff Davis Highway
Ruther Glen VA 22546